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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON HAMAS, ANTI-TERROR
LEGISLATION, OIL PRICES

Editorial Commentary on Hamas

-- "Hamas must choose: the prisoners' document or the referendum"

Daily columnist Jamil Nimri writes on the back-page of centrist, independent, Arabic daily Al-Ghad (06/07): "For what purpose is Hamas trying to buy time? Does it have any exits in the horizon? The upcoming project is the Israeli unilateral solution, namely Olmert's plan to withdraw from half of the West Bank. We fear that this is what Hamas wants without actually saying it.. But Hamas must not misread the situation. Israel never withdraws in return for nothing, and the price for the withdrawal is an international acknowledgement of the unilaterally imposed border. What is the Hamas government going to do then? It cannot even shoot a single bullet at Israel - as it does now - because that will expose it and its people to a crushing reaction.. What Hamas is doing now is allowing the unilateral solution to pass. This constitutes great danger not just for the Palestinians but also for Jordan."

-- "Jordanian messages to Olmert and Haniyeh"

Columnist Fahd Kheetan writes in the inside page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (06/07: "The currently adopted Jordanian policy vis--vis the Palestinians is not useful at all for both parties. Arming Abbas' forces, to the other party, only suggests a hostile Jordanian position and bias. Direct contact with the Palestinian government will enable Jordan to explain the dangers that the policy of the Hamas government poses to Jordan and the region. Direct meetings represent an opportunity to make them understand that adopting a hardline stand with the international community will only give Israel an additional and a legitimate justification to implement the withdrawal plan, and this harms Jordan as much as it harms the Palestinian people."

Editorial Commentary on Jordan's Anti-Terrorism Law

-- "Terrorism and legislations"

Columnist Ibrahim Gharaibeh writes on the op-ed page of centrist, independent Arabic daily Al-Ghad (06/08): "Have the legislations currently in effect been the cause for the success of terrorist operations? Is there a relationship between terrorist incidents and judicial loopholes through which terrorists could escape? And as such, is there a need or justification for intensifying laws and expanding the reasons for arrests and observation? Most of the terrorist operations that occurred in Jordan have failed (from the technical viewpoint) and only a very limited number of operations actually succeeded.. There was no legislative related issue that had helped the terrorists escape or accomplish their operation.. There is consensus of course on the need to combat terrorism and put a stop to it. But is that achievable through intensifying laws and regulations? Even when we succeed in stopping instigation in favor of terrorism and hatred, would we succeed in stopping this beyond our border and in the media networks and space which are outside the framework of state sovereignty, laws and material and technical capacity? Terrorism is not a Jordanian problem and does not have to do with Jordanian citizens and Jordanian policies and stands. It is a world issue that requires world handling.. One way or the other, legislations, however intense they are, will not solve the problem because they are, in majority if not entirely, related to the United States of America and Israel.. As for terrorism that is related to local and internal policies and stands, it is not difficult to control and fight it within the context of legislations and available resources, which are in fact more than sufficient to confront terrorism and crime. Simply

put, fighting terrorism may be linked to justice and equality first and foremost, then to the National Aid Fund, The Development and Employment Fund, housing projects, municipalities development, local governance and education reform."

-- "Debate needed

The centrist, elite English daily Jordan Times (06/07) editorializes: "Since September 11, most western democracies have adopted anti-terror legislation largely restrictive of basic freedoms. If well-established democracies, if the very temples of personal, civil and political rights, have reneged on the principles of the inviolability of the human person, freedom of assembly, right to privacy and presumption of innocence, and have de facto legalized incommunicado detentions and other undemocratic practices, then why should less advanced and much more fragile countries, with political systems that are only close - or not even close- to real democracies, not do the same? Less democracy exacerbates, and does not curb, terror. Renouncing the democratic march means giving in to the terrorists and helping them achieve exactly what they want.. The time for a serious and constructive campaign against the draft is now. Time for dialogue is now. The government should not shut the door and the opposition should lower its propagandistic tone. And all, opposition and government, should keep in mind King Abdullah's vision when he urged the introduction of an anti-terror bill late last year. He specifically asked for a law that would allow Jordan to be, at the same time, 'an oasis of security and stability and a haven for freedom where human rights are respected.' He clearly does not want any to be achieved at the expense of the other. Neither do the people."

Editorial Commentary on Oil Prices/Nuclear Energy

-- "A nuclear energy plant in Jordan"

Columnist Basem Twaisi writes on the op-ed page of

centrist, independent Arabic daily Al-Ghad (06/08) urges Jordan to consider nuclear power as an alternative and a solution to energy problems in the country. He says: "Sooner or later, we will arrive at the conviction that one of the basic alternatives to the chronic energy problem in Jordan is the same solution that many other world countries have arrived at . namely to resort to peaceful nuclear energy.. The national alternative to the energy crisis lies in the basket of local energy sources, based on constructing a nuclear energy plant to meet Jordan's needs of electricity and energy for some production sectors. From others' experiences, Jordan will be able to save 40 to 50% of its energy needs. We can easily develop our scientific capacity, because Jordan's political values and friendships with nuclear producing world countries will provide the necessary support in terms of legitimacy, the right to import this technology and even financing.. The nuclear energy option for Jordan is a pivotal and decisive option. If we do not start it now, future generations may accuse us of shortsightedness and lack of resourcefulness."

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